

A post I made August 2022 on a subreddit (see NYT piece for some more context - <https://www.nytimes.com/wirecutter/reviews/big-berkey-water-filter-system/>):

“Someone noted that Wideners did a test on Berkey and some other filters, but it's important to note they only tested 1 liter. Wideners' test results here - <https://blogmedia.wideners.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/Wideners-Water-Filter-Testing.pdf> In the test results, it states: "1 liter was passed through each filter." Berkey claims that it can filter 3,000 gallons (or 11,356 liters) - <https://berkeywaterkb.com/what-happens-if-i-use-my-black-berkey-elements-after-3000-gallons/>. 1 liter is very much less than 11,356 service life that Berkey claims.

Also, they only claim that 3,000 gallons is for heavy metals, not for any other contaminant. I emailed Berkey about this particular link, where they say you can use a filter past 3,000 gallons, and they said they don't actually recommend doing that. I asked why they published this, then, and where the test results are, and they did not answer about why they published this, and they said that the 3,000 gallons is "estimated." I emailed asking how they "estimated," and when they're actually going to test to 3,000 gallons. They did not answer. I emailed again, they did not answer. I did this once a week for a month, no answer. That is telling. They are liars and know they've been caught by me, so they refuse to answer.

If you look at the test results that Berkey publishes - <https://berkeywaterkb.com/black-berkey-purification-elements-test-results/> - you'll notice that EnviroTek does the major tests. The title of the claim is to NSF standards. I found a copy of NSF standard 53 from 2009 on Archive.org, and it states that filters are tested anywhere from 120%-200% of their "service cycle," or their rated filtering capacity/life cycle. This means that the Berkey, if tested to NSF standard 53, would be tested to anywhere between 3,600 gallons and 6,000 gallons. I emailed Jaime Young at EnviroTek about his test results for this test - <https://berkeywaterkb.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Black-Berkey-Heavy-Metal-Chemical-VOC-Pharmaceutical-Petrol-Removal-Test-Report.pdf> - with "NSF Standard 53" in the title. He said that he tested all listed contaminants to 200 gallons, except lead, which he tested to 2,000 gallons.

So...his title for his test is a lie. It's not to NSF Standard 53, which is why Berkey is not listed on NSF's website for Standard 53 certified filters - <https://info.nsf.org/Certified/DWTU/> (select Standard 53 from the dropdown menu, and type "Berkey" into the search - can do the same with WQA, which is the only other major, accredited group to certify to NSF standards - <https://wqa.org/find-products#/>. IAPMO, Canadian Standards Association (CSA), and UL are accredited by NSF, but they certify very few consumer-level water filters. The NSF and WQA links are the only two real databases worth searching as a consumer). I assume that Young's lab gets away with such a title because certain parts of his test are to NSF standards. But, not all of them, especially the service/life cycle testing.

Now, this is not to mention that he didn't even test to 100% of the advertised 3,000 gallon service cycle of the Berkey. He tested to 7% and to 67%. That is laughably pathetic! To further

cast doubt on his test results, he told the New York Times that he saw lead performance drop off at 1,100 gallons, yet he told me it wasn't until 2,000 gallons that he saw a drop off...he can't even get it straight in answering simple questions, so I'm beginning to doubt his ability to get it right in the lab. (Another weird thing about Jaime Young's lab is several brands use him as the third party lab, and lean on his test results to make it seem like they got certified by NSF accredited labs for all of those contaminants, when in fact they only got NSF certified for one or two contaminants, or in the case of Berkey, zero contaminants. It's deceptive marketing. I'll concede that any NSF is better than none, though, and Berkey has none).

The gist? Berkey (New Millenium Concepts is the company, Berkey the brand) made up the 3,000 gallon number. It is literally a made up number they "estimated" with a math formula they refuse to email me or make public. The only test we have that suggests a life/service cycle for the Black Berkey filters is 200 gallons for all contaminants except heavy metals, which is 1,100 gallons.

1,100 gallons for heavy metals, and 200 gallons for everything else, isn't horrible, but it's hard to trust when you consider their bold-faced lie about 3,000 gallons and the sketchiness of the results from the lab they use. Throw in zero NSF certifications, and I'm done.

They are liars and thieves, and it took me 8 years to wake up and realize I'd been duped. I admit it, I was ignorant and gullible and duped. Now, I'm moving on. I hope everyone else wakes up and lets Berkey go out of business by purchasing good filters instead of their relative junk.

An interesting series of posts on water filtration and prepping is here, and he talks about alternatives to Berkey for emergency situations:

<https://www.survivalistboards.com/threads/safe-water-theory.392651/>

<https://www.survivalistboards.com/threads/water-filters-berkey-black-lifestraw-etc-and-updated-feedback.417968/>